

Message Text

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47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8289

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UNCLAS MONTREAL 1783

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJ: POPULARITY OF "INDEPENDENCE" SHOWS SLIDE

1. A POLL TAKEN BETWEEN NOVEMBER 17 AND 19, FOLLOWING THE RISE TO POWER OF PARTI QUEBECOIS ON FIFTEENTH, INDICATES THAT SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENCE HAS DROPPED FROM PRE-ELECTION LEVEL. ANSWERS TO "IF THERE WERE A REFERENDUM TODAY WOULD YOU VOTE FOR OR AGAINST INDEPENDENCE" EVOKED ELEVEN PERCENT FOR, SIXTY-FIVE PERCENT AGAINST, AND TWENTY-SIX PERCENT WHO WERE UNDECIDED OR REFUSED TO RESPOND. COMPARABLE FIGURES IN POLL TAKEN BETWEEN NOVEMBER FIRST AND FIFTH WERE: EIGHTEEN PERCENT FOR, FIFTY-EIGHT PERCENT AGAINST, AND TWENTY-FOUR PERCENT NOT RESPONDING.

2. BOTH POLLS CONDUCTED BY SAME PEOPLE AND REPORTEDLY THE SAME PUBLIC QUERIED EACH TIME.

3. BY PARTY, ANSWERS BREAK DOWN: PQ VOTERS, TWENTY-SIX PERCENT FOR, FORTY-NINE PERCENT AGAINST, TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT NOT RESPONDING; LIBERALS TWO PERCENT FOR, EIGHTY-EIGHT PERCENT AGAINST, AND TEN PERCENT NOT RESPONDING; UN, EIGHTY-FIVE PERCENT AGAINST AND FIFTEEN PERCENT NOT REPLYING. FIGURES ARE CONSIDERED CONFIRMATION OF EARLIER POLL SHOWING MAJORITY OF PQ VOTERS NOT REPEAT NOT INDEPENDENTISTS.

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4. PROFESSOR PINARD UNDERSCORED, RE THIS POLL, HIS VIEW THAT
TAKING POWER WITH SO LITTLE SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENCE HOLDS AS
MUCH PROSPECT FOR DIMINISHING WHAT SUPPORT THERE IS AS FOR EN-
HANCING ITS PROSPECTS. HE PREMISED THIS TO US RECENTLY (AT TIME
HE PROJECTED BIG PQ WIN) ON THEORY GOVERNMENTS PERFORCE BECOME
RESPONSIBLE, LOSING MISSIONARY FERVOR EN ROUTE. THIS PROMPTS
DISENCHANTMENT AND GENERAL ISOLATION OF BACK BENCH "MISSIONARIES,"
POSSIBLY CAUSING PARTY SPLIT BUT IN ANY EVENT LOWERING RADICAL
EXPECTATIONS.
HARPER

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